

Speech given by Dr. Harold A. Lett for Workshop, Modern Trends in Intergroup Relations, Rutgers University, July 1959.

Let anyone gets the notion that I consider myself, or am considered, an expert on housing, I want to put your mind at ease. I definitely am not, but I have had to take a sharp look at many facets of the very complicated problem of housing. My job this morning is not to present anything new to a group such as this, because I cannot presume to offer anything new. Everything about the problem in housing has been hashed over and over. I hope to present, to rearrange, or to reorganize the known things; to give a fresh slant on those things that we know, to differentiate them from the things we THINK we know. I believe that one of the great problems of persons interested in the intergroup relations field or associated even remotely with it is the inability to separate the objective from the subjective. Why things are, and how to get rid of our pent-up emotions with respect to the many problems in the intergroup field, engages so much of our attention and burns up so much of our energy that we find ourselves not coping with the fellow who is on the opposite side of the fence, and who is using his skill and his intelligence in order to sell that which is his particular point of view. In the intergroup relations field, there is a constant challenge for exchange of opinions and for review of our own outlook upon a particular aspect of the problem.

In this outlook, are we really being objective, are we restraining our emotional reaction to a situation or a problem, or are we being impelled, day after day, to engage in a sort of anxious quest for quick solutions without a proper analysis of the factors out of which successes in other fields of interest were attained? If there is any particular value to a workshop of this sort, it is that we have brought together here people representing many occupations and fields of interest, so we may have an opportunity to exchange views and perhaps get fresh slants from persons who do not have the distorted vision or limited perception that we, who confine ourselves to the one occupational or professional pursuit, have. A lack of exchange

DEC 6 1973

certainly leads to provincialism, to intellectual and social stagnation.

This workshop, therefore, hopes to provide the favorable climate within which a reasonable amount of uninterrupted exchange and exploration may be exercised, at least for a limited period, a period which, however, is rarely given to us on our individual job situations. I know that one of the very serious gripes that I had when I was a working man (not being one anymore, they tell me) was that the demands of the job were such that, to use the hackneyed phrase, "nose to the grindstone," we were prevented the kind of outside reading, the research, the exchange that is essential if one is to get a fresh slant. The chance of remaining static is almost an inescapable part of this "nose to the grindstone" that is found in our usual preoccupation with our job.

I should like to present what I consider to be a number of basic facts demonstrated in current knowledge. You may find yourself in disagreement with me, as to whether or not there is universal acceptance of these facts. I welcome that kind of disagreement because this will be the beginning of the free exchange that is so essential. First of all, I would assert that, of all the commodities available on the American free market that are designed to meet the basic needs and wants of the people, housing is the only one that is not competitive. I will say this in another way: Given all of the money that you need to provide yourself with your basic needs and wants, you can buy anything in the American free enterprise system that is essential to those needs and wants except housing; that is, if you happen to be one of approximately 27,000,000 Americans, almost 1/6 of the total population, who are the identifiable groups which are charged with having the magic power of depreciating property values by their mere presence. This commodity is then not on the free and open market to you. It is a highly controlled market, where the natural laws of supply and demand are distorted, limited, and twisted to the degree that there is little that you can do about it. You can get the finest car that's made, at home or abroad; you can purchase the very finest of clothing; foods of all

sorts and description are available to you according to your price and your whims; and so you can go through the entire list of commodities in what purports to be a free enterprise market. And you will find this one exception—housing. The minorities to which I refer are forced to buy in a "rigged" or controlled market, where their demand for housing always exceeds the supply available to them; where the supply available, most frequently, is a marginal supply, is composed of shoddy or shabby goods, and proportionately is more costly than the better variety of goods on the market. Now that's a pretty broad statement, but, I assert that this is a proven and an acknowledged fact. We are placed in the peculiar position in the American economy of being able to put a sign up, almost anyplace, with respect to the housing market, a simple little sign that says, "blight for sale," limiting the market to which this offer is being made.

This condition means almost automatically that these exploitable minorities become an economic advantage to the exploiter in the housing industry. By the same token, this becomes extremely costly to society which must pay the bill for the evil by-products created by this kind of "black market" trading, this kind of controlled market situation. I think the great evil, and perhaps the greatest challenge confronting us, is that, as yet, society does not know that there is this peculiar contradiction in the market of housing; namely, that the exploitable minorities whom they have been taught to fear actually serve the housing industry in a very profitable manner, but, at a great cost to society itself. This society, as yet, has not been able to recognize nor measure. I think it is very important to keep this before us, because it represents one of our greatest challenges in terms of need for our influence in the community.

Many identifiable minorities are victims of the practice in all parts of the country, but the Negro is the constant and universal victim. The constant problem and the ever-present danger is that consideration of the serious housing problem is being beclouded by the emotions aroused by discussions of the race problem,

par 22. In other words, I'm saying that there would be millions of people in America who could be alerted in much more effective manner to this overall problem of housing were it not for the fact that it is affected by the emotional quality of "the race problem." If we could just exclude the picture of the Negro in our discussions, in our re-evaluation of the whole situation; if we could pull the race element out of housing just for a moment, we would be able to accomplish so very much more, because more people would be receptive. But the fears that are at the core of this situation—that is, the housing market—grow out of the basic fears that have been created by all the dangers that are supposedly inherent in bi-racial association.

You may remember several years ago the Japanese on the West Coast who was kept out of middle class housing (Sam Lee, I think his name was). He was a hero of the 99th Pursuit Squadron in Europe. He was quite a man in every respect, but, being Oriental, he was shut out of a particular neighborhood. There was national indignation that this sort of thing should happen to a man like him. The nearest similar example involving Negro-white relations has been the Levittown, Pennsylvania incident. As you will recall, there was nothing like the furor that followed the Lee incident, even though Levittown was a meaner and nastier kind of situation.

Next, America's materialism, restlessness, and high physical standards of living are accelerating the exodus from central city. This phenomenon, in turn, is contributing several unfortunate by-products. If you haven't read "Exploding Metropolis," by all means do so. These essays are some of the most forcibly-written expositions of the things that are happening to the American community as this exodus from central city increases. New communities are being built out in the countryside by people who are impelled by an urge to seek seduction—~~exaltation~~ is a better word for it—and to keep up with the Smith's and the Joneses. One of the by-products of this movement is that it bequeaths the ever-increasing burden

of blight, of higher welfare costs, of greater institutional costs and soaring tax rates, upon the people in the community least able to afford these costs. Central City is deteriorating because the leadership, the middle-class and upper-class people, are forsaking it. This results almost inevitably in divided loyalties with the increasing number of residents of suburban and exurban communities giving less and less attention and support to the mushrooming needs of Central City. This status-inspired movement tends to siphon off the white, Christian, middle-class leadership of the metropolitan area into sterile, suburban islands of status-seeking conformists, creating and strengthening their inclinations toward separatist doctrines and practices. Again, Levittown is an example, an indication of what the siphoning-off process does. The first instance is that selecting of the fearful, insecure people who are seeking the more remote kind of existence, away from the crowd and the turmoil of the city, but who, in that sterile environment, experience a strengthening of the fears which impelled their movement at the outset. Then follows the fear of invasion, as they would envision it. Their attitudes become much more rigid than they would have been had they remained citizens of Central City.

Another of the by-products is a tendency to discourage and handicap minority group leadership, which finds itself abandoned by the majority group in confronting the overwhelming problem of Central City created by the exodus; thus minority group leadership seeks similar escape to suburbia or from the problems of the city. And so the problems increase. In every group with whom I have discussed any part of this situation, one of the first questions put is, "But what is Negro leadership doing about this situation?" There are really no more than one or two answers. Negro leadership is finding itself so overwhelmed that it is escaping because, as it looks upon the problem, it realizes that it does not have the tools, the materials, the strength, the influence to overcome the things that is happening in the housing bequeathed to its group.

These are tremendous problems with which all the rest of society has practically admitted its inability to cope. Thus Central City gives statistical support to the assumption that minority group housing is considerably below standard in quality, space and value, even though daily it is being offered on the market at comparatively higher prices to this particular minority than would be possible in any other element in society, with the possible exception of the new Puerto Rican. We are called upon, then, to review quite objectively and honestly this old, old question that has not been resolved properly: whether minorities create blight, or whether blight has been reserved for the minorities. I think it is important that we are very clear in our own minds which is true, so that we are in a position to give logical interpretation to those who have not been close enough to the problem to make any kind of evaluation.

Another of our principle problems: I submit that the "sacred cow" of that part of the American free enterprise system, which is the housing industry, is more resistant to the demands for equality of opportunity and more successful in its resistance. First, I think it is the emotional connotation of this freely used descriptive phrase of home being "a man's castle." This tradition in American life classifies the house as one of the inviolable places in all of the community, "a man's castle," that which is the most sacred to him in the preservation of his family entity. Therefore, it is not touchable by any of the controls that would be involved in bringing about the kind of exchange, the cross-fertilization, the social mobility, all the things which bespeak a democratic society. The emotional connotation of this term, "a man's castle," is one of the slogans, one of the appeals by which legislators, the general public, administrators, even we, are made to hesitate in anything that we would do affecting a person's home, or a house that would make a home.

The opposition is more successful in this resistance, because of the long success the housing industry has had in exploiting the housing market, in equating

social status, monetary value and personal safety of an individual or family of the in-group with its monopoly of the desirable neighborhoods in any community. Let me restate this: The housing industry, through this emotional appeal, has been able to interpret a man's house or "a man's castle" as being a symbol of social status; you are in your community what your house says you are, what the neighborhood in which you live says you are. Social status becomes a very important factor in determining the self-esteem of an individual and his family. The monetary value of a house is supposed also to be associated with the in-group monopoly upon certain areas of the residential community. If "my kind" of people can have monopoly or exclusive right to this neighborhood, then for some peculiar reason its monetary value remains at a high value. This belief persists despite hundreds and even thousands of examples to the contrary. We will find this unusual circumstance prevailing because the emotional kind of evaluation that an individual places upon his house—his nice middle-class, comfortable home in a nice middle-class, comfortable and restricted community—represents a value on a very high level. If, however, his house were actually to be put on the market, which he really doesn't intend to do, his value would be at a considerably lower level. There are these two evaluations: the owner's subjective level and the price a buyer will be willing to pay. But we have been successful in equating social status and in-group monopoly with a kind of monetary value, even though it may not necessarily stand the test of exchange on the open, competitive market.

Then the matter of personal safety has been equated with this in-group monopoly, because, "as long as we are surrounded by our kind of people, no bad things can happen to us." There is the fallacious assumption that "our kind of people" in the homogeneous community are those who always have free and friendly exchange. The people who live in these communities never seem to realize, unless they have been sensitized, that there is a very small minority of their neighbors who are their intimate friends, that a much larger group is composed simply of speaking

acquaintances, and that there are a lot of people in their community with whom they have no relationship whatever, because of one or another form of dislike. There is still another fallacy that persists--the concern with personal safety that finds its ultimate expression in the inevitable question, "You wouldn't want your daughter to marry one of them, would you?" Here again, I present an asserted but undocumented fact that sons and daughters of neighbors rarely marry each other. I wonder if we have ever thought of that? When we grow up as children and play together in the neighborhood, we know so much about idiosyncracies of the other person that we never reach the altar with them. Glamour is associated with the people that come from other places. So I have often said, facetiously, that disputing the fallacious assumption that is embodied in this question, perhaps the best insurance in the world one would have that his daughter won't marry one of these peculiar creatures is to have one of them as a next-door neighbor. Of course, that kind of logic doesn't get very far, but it is essential for us to have this in mind, that there has been exploitation on an emotional plane that equates the business of status, of monetary value, and of safety, with majority group monopoly of residential areas.

The housing industry has been successful in maintaining these fears and bolstering the act of resistance. They have had an equally long success in maintaining highly profitable use of the most deteriorated structures and areas of the community, by virtue of the limited choice of housing made available to minority group home seekers. It's like what we used to do as children on rainy days, if we could get out. We built little mud dams so that the water would back up. This dammed-up force of hemmed-in water was constantly probing, seeking some way out, and when there was one, tiny breach in the dam, it spilled out, causing difficulty or damage further on. By creating this dammed-up situation in housing, natural release and dispersion has been denied until a tiny little trickle enabled a

a breakthrough and brought about release of a destructive kind of force which originally was not destructive at all. Success in maintaining a highly profitable use of deteriorated structures has been possible only by damming up more and more of a demand market upon the comparatively few limited and deteriorated structures available to this market until individuals who are able to break out into some "restricted" area are willing to take properties at prices they can't afford. As they spill over into a new area, this area then is exposed to over-use because of this great demand force that has resulted from this dammed-up situation. Thus, the very process of limiting a minority group market to ever-decreasing deteriorated facilities creates the very condition that we have been taught to fear. They have been successful. Americans have been successfully frightened through the efficacy of a highly organized economic and political lobbying machine which serves to hush or nullify the voice of the people upon the legislative officers. We who are concerned with human relations have not been able to devise the skill, the coordination and the constance to off-set that which is a highly organized, "well-oiled" bit of machinery that is working year after year to make allies out of the vast majority of American citizens and to combat this evil which is being perpetrated upon Americans.

The next demonstrated fact is that the great benefits expected and predicted from government subsidy of low rent housing have failed to materialize, both as a means of rebuilding or eliminating slum areas and as a way to the rehabilitation of slum-bred personalities and character. The persons who envisioned public housing dreamed of all the things that could be done in transforming people, of testing the old slogan that "slums breed crime." They have fallen into the trap of expecting brick and mortar to transform human beings, without benefit of the leadership and the teaching that is an essential part of any transformation of human beings, or of transition from one state of being to another. We have seen the evils of politically motivated selection methods in all sections of the country, and we

have seen situations where the principal element of family need from among the many criteria that determine the eligibility of families deferred because the displacement of masses of minority group people has placed housing authorities in the position where it had little choice in the selection of tenants. Imposed upon public housing people is a great challenge and a demand that they provide the leadership in aiding people during a period of transition and upward mobility and in their attempts to adapt to a new environment and a new situation. We have seen public housing and all of its beautiful dreams and ideals descend to the level where housing administration has become very little more than glorified rent collection agencies, with very little understanding, sympathy or aid being given to the people who are exposed to this so-called rehabilitation process.

The next demonstrated fact is that the newer approach to slum elimination and the rebuilding of Central City through concessions to business interests has given greater impetus to racial and ethnic segregation in the American community. To be specific, urban renewal has been looked upon by many as a way of rebuilding Central City, to re-establish this cultural and trading center despite the appeals of suburbia and exurbia, with the belief that this rebuilding process also would have a healthy influence upon attitudes within the Central City complex. Actually, in the few examples we have been able to see thus far, it has been the opposite because we have seen masses of minority group people being displaced, shunted into the next potential area of blight, piled on top of each other--again the damming-up process--then the redevelopment plan creating the kind of housing which would never be within the reach of the displaced. It is really questionable whether or not the new housing will be available to the middle class of the racial and cultural identity of the displaced minority. We are creating sterile, monopolistic centers for only "the right kind of people" who, because of their cultural identity and their class level may return from the suburbs and utilize the structures that constitute the new, redeveloped city. This is Urban Renewal, or as some of the colored brothers say,

"You-all's removal" program .

It is probable that you will be able to add a considerable list of items beyond these eight I have given, items which could be considered universally accepted statements of fact as we assess the total housing problem and as we attempt to determine exactly what are the challenges that confront us. It is upon such a foundation that any constructive thinking must be based. I think it is incumbent upon us to examine the opposite side of the shield; that is, review the principal existing fallacies which dominate the thinking of a large number of the people in the American community, because these too represent the substance with which we must deal in reaching any kind of understanding, in imparting information, or in developing corrective tools.

1. Among these fallacies is one I dwelt upon and which I will touch again for emphasis; namely, that homogeneity in a neighborhood, racial or religious, can be equated with mutuality of interest; that we're all alike; that social equality leads inevitably to social intercourse; that peace, tranquility and safety reside where we keep "our kind of people" living and exclude all others. This belief prevails despite the ever-present evidence of dislike, strained relations, and even social ostracism to be found in these so called homogeneous communities. This belief continues, not withstanding the classic example of the McCoy and Hatfield feuds, which we can find not only in the hills of Kentucky, but everywhere, where there are people.

2. That heterogeneity, the mixing of racial, religious and ethnic groups, is the exact opposite to the foregoing, and that it presents unavoidable barriers to the attainment of mutuality of interest, of social intercourse, of peace, tranquility and safety; this despite the many, many examples of neighborliness to be found in communities where minority group people, have blended harmoniously into communities otherwise considered homogeneous in character.

3. The third fallacy, is that minority group people possess, in common, certain undesirable traits and predictable characteristics which prevent harmony in personalized association; this despite the broad refutation of these beliefs to be observed in

the very successful fight being waged against employment discrimination, in the desegregation of colleges and universities throughout the country, in the outlawing of discrimination in the use of public transportation, public accommodations and in the armed forces. If your memory is long enough to reach back just 15 years, you will remember that this fallacy applied in all of these areas. You didn't dare permit these various groups to work together in intimate association, you didn't dare permit them to use the same transportation facilities, the same public accommodations. You didn't dare let them, particularly in the South, go to the same universities. You didn't dare mix them in the great task of defending the country against encroachment from without; you didn't dare put them together in police forces and in the armed forces because they were bound to fight each other. We have seen this ghost laid time after time in every other type of emotional situation and in personal relationships, but despite constant refutation of this fallacy, it persists in housing.

4. That these several factors in turn make direct and depressing impact upon property values if minorities are admitted to respectable residential neighborhoods. I haven't seen any studies by the opposition that verifies this position. We have had very few studies from our point of view, exposing what is the nature of the impact and what it is actually that influences property values and the nature of influence; not enough of this has been done. But we do have ample basis to justify further research along these lines in order to fortify these facts, that preliminary inquiry has established.

5. Another fallacy is that it is the patriotic duty of all upstanding, honorable citizens to aid and abet, in any way possible, in the protection of these concepts; that to question the belief, to challenge the tradition by selling property on the open market makes one a traitor, a renegade, or worse. We might gloss this over, but we will find within our own circle of so-called liberal persons, individuals who when confronted individually with this problem will take the position, "I dare not become a traitor to

my group by opening the housing market wherever I have influence." So deeply ingrained is this fallacy that it touches the lives and the beliefs and the operations of tens of thousands of people, who otherwise have reasonably liberal and honorable views in human relations; so we can't brush this off. This is a form of intimidation which prevents the operation of a free market, even by those who would want to be decent.

6. The fallacy that all these beliefs can be justified because minorities do create slums, rather than that the slums and the blight in reality are being reserved for the minorities.

7. That someday -- and this is an amusing kind of fallacy -- if it weren't so maddening when you hear it repeated -- that someday when minority group people become educated (which really means when they lose their identity and their identifiable features that make them visible in a crowd) the problem will right itself without threat, tension or conflict. So all we have to do is to take our time, be patient and wait for these things to unfold. The interesting thing is that the emphasis is on the education of the minority; not the education of the majority, where these attitudes reside. Again you may be able to add several items to this list as a means of having before us all of the subjective factors which give strength to the opponents of a free housing market. It will be interesting too, in a courageous exercise of self-examination to determine for ourselves just how many of these beliefs linger in our own consciousness. These facts and fallacies are determining housing trends today. The enactment of laws against discriminations in housing is only a beginning, but as we are discovering about other regulatory laws, these are not enough, because the vast majority of the people have been miseducated and are afraid to exercise their rights, afraid to oppose the forces who uphold the tradition, afraid even to have recourse to the law. Let us present just a few of the principal road blocks to democratic housing. We have to find new methods of reaching the unreachable: the housing industry. We don't

know how to reach them, let's admit that right at the outset, but we have to find ways of doing it. We must learn how to undo the very efficient work they have done in coloring public opinion. Housing fears have been sold to the general public, like no other fears in the entire area of intergroup relations. I have used a simple figure many times in defining the American public as we would see it with respect to attitudes in human relations. On the one hand, the small, articulate, active minority, the stand-pat group that wants no change; if anything, they want retrogression. "These people are pushing too much, let's go back to the good old days." Then on the other is the small articulate group that we would call the progressives. Each of these groups, from time to time, makes enough noise to cause people to think that they are "the voice of the people", when in reality, in the middle are the people who haven't expressed any voice on various aspects of the human relations problem. The thing that causes retrogression in the community or progress in the community is the influence wielded on this complacent mass by one or the other of these active, articulate forces. To a greater degree than in any other phase of intergroup relations, the negative forces in housing have made an impact upon this large complacent, silent group in the center and are influencing the attitudes of thousands of people who are in most other respects decent American citizens. We have to figure out some way to influence positively the attitudes of the residents in our communities; some way to overcome minority groups reluctance; some way to continue to probe and to educate until there are break-through's on many fronts. We have a problem of promoting the dispersion of minority homeseekers as the alternative to waiting for the dam to break, because if there were dispersion there aren't enough minorities in the country to depress the property values of all of the middle-class housing areas in the United States. If there were dispersion, social status like water would seek its own level, because a free market would enable people on all socio-economic levels to purchase housing within their competence. The artificial market that prevails

causes people on the lower income levels to occupy housing on a higher income level because that is the only way they may get out of the ghetto. Dispersion then, means in truth a free, open market where people can buy on a level of accommodation to their purses, their tastes, their needs.

We must have a rather clear view of the complexities of the problem of rebuilding slums and blighted areas, without creating more slums through careless, thoughtless relocation or through over-crowding and ignoring of the masses of minority people being relocated. We must give more careful thought to the end result of urban renewal. What is there in site selection which can be influenced and improved by inter-group agencies and people and what guarantees can be assured of the democratic re-use of these renewed areas.

Some Questions and Answers

Question: What evidence is available that the housing industry is an organized group perpetuating segregation and influencing public opinion? Is there a possibility in this group we may have as a resource person, a person who represents this opposing point of view -- to present their point of view in trying to prove that they are right in their approach.

Dr. Latt: What evidence is there that the industry is an organized group? (I may have used that term.) I think we can look upon the housing industry or the housing problem as representing something of a vicious cycle here (draws circle on blackboard) with the householder, the general public, the real estate agent, the broker, the lending institution and the developer all representing points on that circle. This is the entire area of resistance into which some entry has to be made. Whether they have exchanged opinions in order to develop a stratagem of their own in the form of a widespread conspiracy, I don't think anyone would dare say that. The thing that is important to us, however, is that they held the same position at every point of this circle. Therefore, our challenge is, which

of these represents a particular point of weakness that we may assault or assail? Do we put our eggs in one basket; or, do we try to develop techniques that will make a simultaneous attack upon every area. When we think in these terms, then, we have in one group the house owner and the general public; in another the real estate interests; and in the third, the leading, developing and building interests. Here we have three major areas whose interests are in common. Any intelligent approach to the problem must be based upon some means of making entry at one of these three points of the circle.

Now, another of the problems is posed in the second question. Now about having a progressive spokesman from one of these groups? Most of the national agencies dealing with this problem, such as the National Committee Against Discrimination in Housing, The National Urban League and others, have been trying to find individuals from within the industry who would be willing to come forward. Now they have found some few who are unafraid. The Commission on Race and Housing has in its membership individuals who are responsible people in the industry. The report that has come from that commission represents the knowledge that these persons possess and have shared with the commission, so that it is a very significant report. Not only liberals who have examined the problem, but also open-minded persons who are identified with the opposition agree that they have shared opinions and apparently have been convinced that there is an opposite side of the argument. The challenge before us, then, is how we can keep probing at the housing industry or at anyone of these several facets of this circle to find the weak points, to gain converts that will enable us then to broaden our spheres of influence. We can continue pointing to this as a goal without expecting immediately to find the answer.

There's no question, but that the housing industry and individuals who are in position to exploit this situation, inevitably lay it at the door of the general public, but this was done in every other situation, in public accommodation, in transportation, in employment discrimination - those who were exploiting the situation invariably charged the public with responsibility, this being one of those intangible claims that takes a long time to measure, to refute or to verify. But as these other programs have unfolded, and progress has been

made, we have seen over and over again that the self-centered, complacent mass, resting between the two articulate minorities is as subject to the appeal of the plus side as of the minus side, if the appeal and the effort is made. We suffer from a lack of effectiveness in appealing to this complacent group because those who exploit the situation can prove that the group is afraid — because real fears have been induced by the negative influences that have operated in housing.

A few years ago, in the Modern Trends Workshop, there was a section of the workshop that was concerned with housing. They decided to visit one or two of these new ex-urban developments where they represented themselves as summer students at Rutgers on a fact-finding mission. Then set forth a number of questions to determine what motivated these people in the establishment of the new communities; how did they feel, what would be their reactions to Negro residents, etc., etc. It admittedly was a superficial inquiry but it was interesting that when they brought back their report and assembled the data they had collected, not all the people there were shown to have prejudices. They had certain reservations, but not prejudices; and they weren't sure they had been misinformed; they wanted more information or would have been more receptive to more information. So the few attempts that have been made to measure the reaction of the general public have served only to indicate they have been misinformed and miseducated but that there is not a deep prejudice residing in this large group.

Question: Our question is somewhat similar but not exactly. We are wondering what Realtors and what Realists are helping solve problem of integration.

Dr. Jetti: I can't answer that on any wide scale nor in specific terms. The examples that we've had, whether through case handling or reports of situations developing in various communities, would suggest first, that Realtors, who are the organized group of white real estate operators and who are a part of the National Association of Real Estate Board, are operating under a very strict code of ethics. Their original code of ethics was an

evil thing in specifying these elements in society that, according to Realtors, represented a negative influence upon property value, including houses of prostitution, racketeers, Negroes and other such groups. They have amended the language of the code. But the basic premise still prevails and they operate under that which was the original premise of the code. And they have indicated those groups and influences they look upon as having negative effect upon community property value; therefore, they will not introduce an alien element into a homogeneous neighborhood or community. I suspect that they adhere to it rather faithfully.

But if the unorganized real estate agent in the community makes a sale in one of these areas, any individual, realtor or not, who wants to make a killing - moves in; this is where fear propaganda then becomes a very effective aid within that neighborhood, and house after house is approached with the kind of sales talk that is guaranteed to produce results. The interesting and ironic part of it is that Realtists who are the organization of Negro real estate brokers and agents, themselves play an important part in this creation of panic in areas of transition. I won't attribute this to all Realtists anymore than I would to all the white Realtors, but Negro real estate operators have been as guilty as others in going into a residential area where the first break had been made and adding to the fear and the confusion of the people who live there, in order to create a fluid market. There are basically decent motives there as well as ulterior motives. If I'm a real estate operator and I have on my list a dozen or 50 clients representing all ranges in the housing market who want houses badly, when I find an area that is open and presents a new market, I'm going to try to capitalize upon that market before my competitor beats me to it. My competitor may be one of the realtors in the big office downtown who adhere to this very rigid code of ethics before the break occurs. But he's going to take from me my buyers now that the break has occurred. So competition in itself creates this maddening influence upon an area in transition, so that all of the people are exposed to

the pressures that fear propaganda has created by: "Property value are going to decline; this is a good time to get a good price; you better sell fast." And people who already have been frightened, yield before this kind of pressure coming from both sides of the community, the Negro and the white.

So, in the entire real estate fraternity we will see this contradictory code of ethics operating; that is, the code of ethics on the one side operating up to a certain point whereby the dammed-up housing demand is created; and then tense competition once the tiny break has been made. In this illustration we see the mechanics by which a neighborhood will change over-night; and, reverting to my original illustration of the dam, meaning that one little trickle of the one family into the area, this being the only place they may go, others quickly follow into that community representing people of all economic levels, all social strata. There will be responsible householders as well as irresponsible householders going into this area, and influences that grow out of that trend will depend very much upon the kind of leadership that prevails in the community in transition and its success in efforts to stabilize the community and preventing panic from spreading.

Question: What successful technique can we utilize to affect change in the attitudes and practices of Real Estate people?

Dr. Lath: As soon as I get the answer to that, I'm going to write it down and copy-write it, and really retire. That's our challenge, put quite simply. I would not presume to answer, because the temptation to find a simple, easy answer is one of our great dangers in this situation. All we know is that we have this kind of a barrier confronting us. And they're either completely close-minded by virtue of prejudice or they're frightened minds; minds that aren't willing to explore of themselves. How to influence people that is your question, because there are people. They are people with vested interest, people with a pre-conditioned attitudes in this whole thing. How to reach them, how to influence them; this is our biggest job. When we find the answers together we will be going someplace.